

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1 1. A computer-implemented method for managing a change to a product structure
 2 comprising:
 3 defining instructions to implement the change to the product structure;
 4 associating a first validity for the change with a first organizational structure, the first
 5 organizational structure having a first organizational view of the product structure;
 6 associating a second validity for the change with a second organizational structure,
 7 the second organizational structure having a second organizational view of the product
 8 structure; and
 9 automatically implementing the change according to the first validity for the first
 10 organizational view, and according to the second validity for the second organizational
 11 view.

1 2. The method of claim 1, wherein defining instructions to implement the change of the
 2 product structure includes defining instructions to change a plurality of different objects
 3 of the product structure.

1 3. The method of claim 1, wherein at least one of the first and second validities depends on
 2 a date.

1 4. The method of claim 1, wherein at least one of the first and second validities is valid
 2 beginning with a first date and ending with a second date.

1 5. The method of claim 1, wherein the first and second organizational structures comprise a
 2 hierarchy of organizational structures and wherein the second validity depends on the
 3 first validity.

1 6. The method of claim 1, wherein at least one of the first and second validities depends on
 2 attaining a production milestone.

1 7. The method of claim 1, wherein at least one of the first and second validities depends on
 2 implementing a different change to the product structure.

1 8. The method of claim 1, wherein a previous validity is associated with the change and
2 wherein defining instructions to implement the change includes defining instructions for
3 modifying the previous validity.

1 9. The method of claim 1, wherein the change includes previous instructions for changing
2 the product structure and wherein defining instructions to implement the change includes
3 defining instructions for modifying the previous instructions.

1 10. The method of claim 1, wherein the first validity precedes the second validity.

1 11. The method of claim 1, wherein the second validity is dependent upon the first validity
2 and contemporaneous with the first validity.

1 12. The method of claim 1, further comprising storing the instructions to implement the
2 change to the product structure, the first validity, and the second validity in a first
3 database, wherein the product structure is stored in a second database, the second
4 database being separate from the first database.

1 13. The method of claim 1, further comprising receiving a request to make a change to a
2 product structure.

1 14. The method of claim 13, further comprising:
2 determining whether the change should be implemented;
3 generating a change order to implement the change, the change order including the
4 instructions to implement the change of the product structure, the first validity, the second
5 validity, and a name of a user who determined that the requested change should be
6 implemented; and
7 storing the change order in a first database, wherein the product structure is stored in
8 a second database, the second database being separate from the first database.

1 15. A computer program product, tangibly stored on a machine readable medium, for
 2 managing a change of a product structure, the computer program product comprising
 3 instructions for causing a processor to:
 4 define instructions to implement the change of the product structure;
 5 associate a first validity for the change with a first organizational structure, the first
 6 organizational structure having a first organizational view of the product structure;
 7 associate a second validity for the change with a second organizational structure, the
 8 second organizational structure having a second organizational view of the product
 9 structure; and
 10 automatically implement the change according to the first validity for the first validity
 11 for the first organizational view, and according to the second validity for the second
 12 organizational view.

1 16. The computer program product of claim 15, wherein defining instructions to implement
 2 the change of the product structure includes defining instructions to change a plurality of
 3 different objects of the product structure.

1 17. The computer program product of claim 15, wherein at least one of the first and second
 2 validities depends on a date.

1 18. The computer program product of claim 15, wherein at least one of the first and second
 2 validities is valid beginning with a first date and ending with a second date.

1 19. The computer program product of claim 15, wherein the first and second organizational
 2 structures comprise a hierarchy of organizational structures and wherein the second
 3 validity depends on the first validity.

1 20. The computer program product of claim 15, wherein at least one of the first and second
 2 validities depends on attaining a production milestone.

- 1 21. The computer program product of claim 15, wherein at least one of the first and second
2 validities depends on implementing a different change to the product structure.
- 1 22. The computer program product of claim 15, wherein a previous validity is associated
2 with the change and wherein defining instructions to implement the change includes
3 defining instructions for modifying the previous validity.
- 1 23. The computer program product of claim 15, wherein the change includes previous
2 instructions for changing the product structure and wherein defining instructions to
3 implement the change includes defining instructions for modifying the previous
4 instructions.
- 1 24. The computer program product of claim 15, wherein the first validity precedes the second
2 validity.
- 1 25. The computer program product of claim 15, wherein the second validity is dependent
2 upon the first validity and contemporaneous with the first validity.
- 1 26. The computer program product of claim 15, the computer program product further
2 comprises instructions for causing the processor to store the instructions to implement the
3 change to the product structure, the first validity, and the second validity in a first
4 database, wherein the product structure is stored in a second database, the second
5 database being separate from the first database.
- 1 27. The computer program product of claim 15, further comprising instructions for causing
2 the processor to receive a request to make a change to a product structure.
- 1 28. The computer program product of claim 27, further comprising instructions for causing
2 the processor to:
3 receive a user-defined determination of whether the change should be implemented;
4 generate a change order to implement the change, the change order including the

5 instructions to implement the change of the product structure, the first validity, the second
6 validity, and a name of a user who determined that the requested change should be
7 implemented; and

8 store the change order in a first database, wherein the product structure is stored in a
9 second database, the second database being separate from the first database.